

United States Mint Offers Refund for Pouches That Are Not Authentic American Indian Products

October 31, 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United States Mint is offering a refund of \$130 to persons who own the 2004 United States Mint Lewis and Clark Coin and Pouch Set, if the pouch was produced by the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio. The United States Mint has learned that neither state nor Federal authorities recognize the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio as an official Indian tribe. Therefore, the pouch is not an authentic American Indian arts and crafts product.

The names of the various artisans and their tribes who crafted the pouches for the United States Mint are identified in certificates of authenticity (COA) accompanying the pouch sets. Owners may ascertain whether their pouch set was crafted by the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio by referring to the COA.

“Americans place their trust in genuine United States Mint products that embody the American spirit,” said United States Mint Director Ed Moy. “The United States Mint wants to uphold that trust, and upon learning this new information, we are offering this refund.”

The United States Mint sold a limited number of the 2004 United States Mint Lewis and Clark Coin and Pouch Sets between September 7, 2004, and December 31, 2004. Each set consisted of a proof Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Silver Dollar, a handcrafted American Indian Pouch, and a COA hand-signed by the American Indian artisan who crafted it, stating the artisan’s tribe and its location. The United States Mint worked with the Circle of Tribal Advisors (COTA) to identify artisans from American Indian tribes to craft each unique pouch. When it was selected to produce pouches, the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio was a member in good standing of COTA. However, the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio reportedly dropped its membership in COTA late in 2005, and COTA adjourned late in 2006 at the end of the National Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commemoration.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Board (IACB), an agency of the U.S. Department of Interior, recently informed the United States Mint that the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio does not meet the legal requirements to produce and market authentic “Indian” products under the Indian Arts and Crafts Act. The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 is a truth-in-advertising law that prohibits misrepresentation in marketing of Indian arts and crafts products within the United States.

“The Indian Arts and Crafts Board applauds the prompt action taken by the United States Mint to protect consumers after we learned that certain pouches sold with coin sets were not authentic Indian products under the Indian Arts and Crafts Act,” said Meridith Stanton, IACB Director.

“Through this collaboration and other coordinated activities with federal, state, and local authorities, the IACB is continuing to pursue investigations of the sale of fraudulent Indian arts and crafts across the country. Our goal is to rid the market of fraudulent Indian products while supporting the sale of authentic Indian arts and crafts. Authentic Indian arts and crafts are original American treasures and integral components of Indian economic livelihood and cultural heritage,” stated Director Stanton.

Those who return the sets to the United States Mint will receive a payment of \$130.00 for each set, representing the original sales price of the product (\$120.00), plus \$10.00 for each set to defray shipping, handling and insurance charges. The owners of the sets who want to keep the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Silver Dollar may return the pouch, along with the COA from the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio, for a prorated refund of \$90.00, representing the prorated sales price of the pouch (\$80.00), plus \$10.00 for each pouch to defray shipping, handling and insurance charges.

To receive a refund, owners should send the 2004 United States Mint Lewis and Clark Coin and Pouch Sets, or pouches, along with the COAs, by insured mail or overnight delivery to United States Mint, ATTN: Indian Arts & Crafts Return, 801 9th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001. Inside of the shipping package be sure to include the return address and all mailing information for the refund, along with a note indicating that the item is to be directed to the Indian Arts & Crafts Return.

For additional information, see the following “Hot Item:”

2004 United States Mint Lewis and Clark Coin and Pouch Sets Containing Pouches From the Shawnee Nation United Remnant Band of Ohio

<http://www.usmint.gov/consumer/index.cfm?action=HotItems>

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

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